

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 OCTOBER 2010

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(288) Program 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Cash asked:

- (1) Will families moved out on “residence determinations” be provided with a visa? If so, what kind? For how long? If not, what will their status be? Will they be considered unlawful non-citizens?
- (2) What sort of security or reporting arrangements will they be subjected to?
- (3) What entitlements will they receive including but not limited to welfare payments, Medicare, dental, mental health, other health and transport benefits, cash payments, clothing allowance, work rights?

Answer:

- (1) People in “residence determination” are still in immigration detention. They will not be provided with a visa and will remain unlawful non-citizens, as is the case for any other detained person.
- (2) People being considered for residence determination will undergo a risk assessment before being moved into the community. There are conditions that clients who are granted a residence determination must comply with, such as (but not limited to) residing at the address specified by the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, reporting to the Department once per week by telephone, allowing a departmental officer to visit at specified times and abiding by all applicable Commonwealth, State or Territory laws.
- (3) The Department will pay accommodation costs of clients in residence determination. These clients are paid a living allowance at no more than 89 per cent of Centrelink payment equivalent, from which the client pays all utilities, food, clothing, transport and household expenses.

As in all immigration detention arrangements, the Department will cover the medical expenses of residence determination clients through its contracted health service provider and through Memoranda of Understanding with state and territory health agencies. Torture and trauma counselling services are also provided if required. As the people in residence determination do not hold visas, they are not eligible for Medicare.

Residence determination clients do not have work rights and therefore cannot undertake any form of paid work.